

Combat Support Brigade (Maneuver Enhancement)

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The Army Transformation Plan (ATP) Roadmap of 2003 laid the blueprint for a radically different Army structure to be in place by 2014. The ATP marks the beginning of the end for the fixed-organization structure within the division and corps. In its place, a modular structure will be the hallmark of the future Army.

Transformation Plan

The Army will consist of new corps and division headquarters designed for joint force operations and for command and control of a tailored mix of forces capable of supporting full-spectrum operations. The traditional combat brigades will be restructured into modular forces called brigade combat teams (BCTs) with improved force mixes, sustainability, and command and control supporting full-spectrum operations. While there will be different types of BCTs (heavy, Stryker, and infantry), they will be based on standard configurations, eventually evolving into the future combat systems brigade.

Along with the restructured BCT, some of the supporting structures of the traditional corps and division will be remodeled. There will be five new brigade-sized units designed to support the deployment and sustainment of the new BCTs. The first four new brigades are the aviation brigade, the fires brigade, the battlefield surveillance brigade, and the sustainment brigade. All of these brigades are now under development as their concepts and organizational structures are shaped to support the modularity designs of the future Army. The last brigade element,

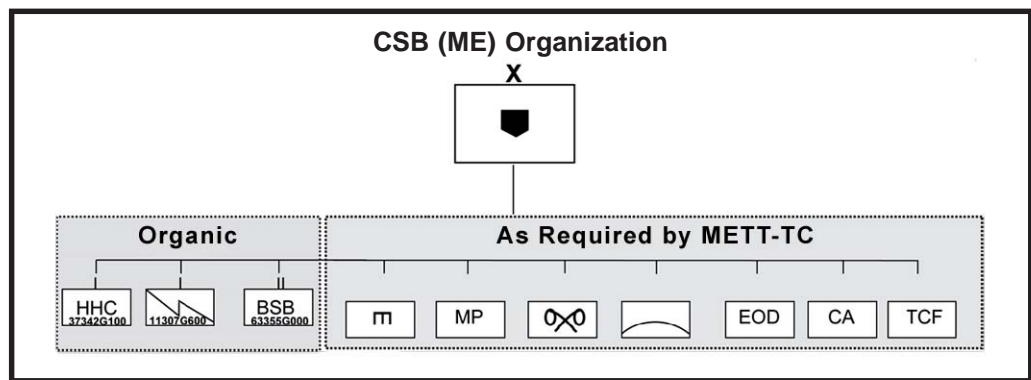
the combat support brigade (CSB) (maneuver enhancement [ME]), is the subject of this article.

Unit Development

While each of the other support brigades can draw its lineage from previous organizations, the CSB (ME) has no direct precedent. It is a new headquarters structured to provide a single command and control element for multiple functions. Formerly, these multiple functions required individual command and control elements and force structures. The CSB (ME) combines disparate functional units such as engineer, military police, chemical, signal, rear-area operations, and (when assigned) a tactical combat force (TCF) into the new organization structure.

Requirements

The new modularity concepts of the Army require a force structure that is responsive, flexible, manpower-efficient, and multifunctional. Additionally, the force requires capabilities in both joint- and single-component deployments and operations. Further, the force needs to accommodate new ideas in force packaging and deployment processes and be able to deploy as a self-contained unit in a nonlinear,



noncontiguous operational environment. The CSB (ME) has been designed with all of these principles in mind.

The CSB (ME) was previously designated as the maneuver enhancement brigade. The recent Army-level name change has not lessened the basic tenet of the unit's mission to provide critical maneuver support to the supported force commander (normally at the division level).

In addition to maneuver support, the CSB (ME) addresses the need to provide multiproponent functions throughout the theater of operations without creating the large overhead associated with a division or corps rear command post (CP). The new brigade has the following two major missions:

- *Maneuver support*—the integrated application of assured mobility and protection capabilities.
- *Terrain management*—the management of terrain within an assigned area of operations.

The CSB (ME) provides maneuver support through the provision of the following major tasks:

- *Assured mobility* encompasses actions designed to guarantee force commanders the ability to move and maneuver where and when they desire, without interruption or delay, to achieve their intent.
- *Protection* covers actions intended to protect the integrity of the individual, the organization, and the force—both individually and collectively.
- *Terrain management* is actions taken to preserve the unit's ability to operate and occupy the areas between the BCTs and the corps.
- *Infrastructure development* is restoration activities that support the return of stability and security in an occupied area and prepare the way for nation building and the return of internal national control.
- *Rear-area operations* enable the use of terrain and urban areas by forces not directly engaged in combat operations and allow the continuous provision of supplies and services to the committed forces.

These tasks are performed throughout an area of operations to ensure freedom of maneuver and preserve combat power. Previously, the division headquarters performed the functions of terrain management, infrastructure development, and rear-area operations, all of which have now devolved to the CSB (ME) within its area of operations.

Design Features

The CSB (ME) has several features to enable the support of full-spectrum operations. The design of the headquarters incorporates the ideas of modularity and multifunctional control. It will be robust and capable of operations in a nonlinear, noncontiguous operational environment. The only permanent structure of the CSB (ME) is the headquarters element with communications and logistics support.

The CSB (ME) force structure will be a tailored force based on the requirements of mission, enemy, terrain and weather, troops and support available, time available, civil considerations (METT-TC). Generally, the brigade will consist of three to eight battalions of engineer, chemical, and military police units and will be specifically tailored with the addition of unique-capability units, such as explosive ordnance disposal and civil affairs, as needed.

The brigade headquarters has the necessary staffing to provide command and control for these combined functions. Each function is represented within the brigade staff through a planning and operations cell providing functional recommendations and decision-making information to the operations and training (S3) section and the command group. Additional capability for multifunctional command and control is provided through a robust liaison cell.

While designed to control multifunctional forces, the brigade can also coordinate with a functional brigade to provide support to the division or corps. Based on the mission, the CSB (ME) may even detach a functional battalion to the functional brigade.

Initially, divisional BCTs will receive task-organized forces from the Army force pool based on METT-TC. When required by the division, the CSB (ME) may provide task forces to support BCT requirements for assured mobility and functional capabilities that go beyond the BCT's organic capabilities. The brigade can organize a task force, provide support and reachback capabilities, and refit the task force when the mission is completed.

Because of the nonlinear, noncontiguous nature of the future battlefield, the CSB (ME) was designed to operate in multiple areas. The brigade headquarters can deploy both a main and a tactical CP with the ability to compose and deploy an additional CP to support short-term or limited-objective missions such as sensitive-site exploitations. The CSB (ME) will have a dedicated organic brigade support battalion to provide supply and transportation functions to the deployed units of the brigade.

A last major design feature is the addition of a cell within the S3 section to provide the terrain management and rear-area functions. In the division area of operations, the CSB (ME) will perform missions such as coordination of stationing, base defense, protection of lines of communication, and area and local security.

The individual unit and base cluster retain defense responsibilities for the unit or base. However, when the threat level exceeds the capability of the organization, the CSB (ME) will provide for additional defensive support through the use of the assigned military police or tactical combat force. This assigned force will provide a needed tactical capability short of assigning a BCT with the protection mission.

Transition

While the exact stationing of the new CSB (ME) headquarters organizations has not been decided, the number of units will extend across the entire Army force structure. A limited number of organizations will be placed in the Active Army, while the remainder will be spread throughout the Army National Guard and the U.S. Army Reserve. The first four units will be activated in fiscal year 2006.

The formulation of this new unit will require two major adjustments in the philosophy of training. The first is in the development of the senior leadership through progressive education and experience. The ability to command and control a multifunctional unit demands the development of new skills to coordinate multiple functions into an integrated execution plan.

The second is the development of the collective skills within the headquarters to produce a coordinated and integrated understanding of the multiple functions on the tactical and operational environment of the future.

The U.S. Army Maneuver Support Center (MANSCEN) is currently designing the training plans and materiel to support the formulation of the new headquarters.

The deployment of the newly created CSB (ME) will provide a valuable and capable element to the future force. The brigade will provide support to the committed BCTs; perform missions in its own area of operations to support the offense, the defense, or stability operations; and support the division and corps rear areas with essential control functions.

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